Harry Huntt Ransom:

An Inventory of His Personal Papers at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Ransom, Harry Huntt, 1908-1976
Title: Harry Huntt Ransom Personal Papers
Dates: 1895-1983
Extent: 4 boxes, 1 oversize flat file
Abstract: The personal papers consisting of preparatory school and college-level student papers (essays, tests, and class notes), photographs, correspondence, and memorabilia document the academic career of this professor of English and chancellor of The University of Texas.

RLIN Record #: TXRC97-A23
Access: Open for Research

Administrative Information

Acquisition: Gift, 1989
Processed by: Bob Taylor, 1997
Repository: Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin
Biographical Sketch

Harry Huntt Ransom, the most significant library builder and educator of the University of Texas' last half century, was born in Galveston on 22 November 1908. From his parents, Harry H. and Marion G. Cunningham Ransom, he early formed habits of public-spiritedness and diligence that characterized his entire life. After graduating from the University of the South in 1928, Harry Ransom received the master's and doctoral degrees in English from Yale. Ransom arrived on the University of Texas campus in 1935 as an instructor in the English Department and continued his association with the university until his death in 1976.

Harry Ransom was made an assistant professor in 1938, and upon his return from military service--he left the Army Air Forces in 1946 with the rank of major--he became an associate professor. Marriage to Hazel Louise Harrod in 1951 and increasingly responsible administrative posts followed, and by 1961 Harry Ransom had been named chancellor of the University of Texas system. He held that post until 1971.

It was during the middle 1950s that Harry Ransom first articulated his desire to "make a good library better." He succeeded in convincing the University's Board of Regents of the need for improved library facilities, leading directly to the 1958 establishment of the Humanities Research Center and, in 1963, to the opening of the Undergraduate Library and Academic Center. The revolution Harry Ransom wrought on the libraries of the UT Austin campus, together with his advocacy of the individual student, are his enduring legacies.

Scope and Contents

The personal papers of Harry Ransom comprise, in the main, his preparatory school and college-level student papers (essays, tests, class notes), photographs of family and school life, some correspondence, and a good deal of memorabilia. While the collection spans the years from 1895 to 1983 the bulk of it is concentrated in the period 1924 to 1953 and appears to represent items Marion Ransom kept to document her son's academic career. The papers therefore give a fair idea of the nature of Harry Ransom's education--and his success as a student--but they are not otherwise especially informative.

The papers have been organized into several series: Academic papers, 1924-47 (1 box); Correspondence, 1895-1983 (1 folder); Memorabilia, 1908-76 (1 box); Photographs, 1895-1975 (1 box); and Printed materials, 1924-75 (6 folders).

Class notes, essays, graded examinations, and a commonplace book are found in the Ransom academic papers, documenting his student life at Sewanee Military Academy, the University of the South, Harvard, and Yale. There is a small group of teaching notes and a grading book for his first year of postwar teaching at the University of Texas. The materials are arranged chronologically and clearly demonstrate Ransom's aptitude and diligence as a student.
The small body of correspondence centers around Ransom's student life in the 1920s and '30s. His own letters are few in number, and most of these were addressed to his mother. Apart from giving some idea of his scholarly and extracurricular interests as a student and his relationship to his mother the series is slight.

Materials as different as Harry Ransom's baby book (with verse by his mother and notes by Ransom upon her death) and the tape recording of the 1976 commemorative assembly held to mark his passing are found in the Memorabilia series. Documents touching upon Ransom's early academic career, together with numerous diplomas are present, as are some materials relating to his editorial work in wartime military service and to Marion Ransom's 1953 funeral. A small group of miscellaneous manuscripts and printed matter and clippings are also housed in the series.

Apart from several family photographs made between 1915 and 1930 and a few photographs dating from after the Second World War the great majority of the images in the Photographic series depict Ransom's school and early professional life. A number of photographs of Hazel Ransom dating from 1938 into the 1960s, as well as photographs of various campuses complement the series. A considerable number of negatives is found in the series for which prints are not present. Additional photographs are present in the Memorabilia series in folders 2.3 and 2.9.

Minor printed materials relating to Sewanee, a group of unused stationery, envelopes, and postcards from the bulk of the final series. Also to be found here is a number of art prints and ephemera.

Index Terms

People

Ransom, Harry Huntt, 1908-1976
Ransom, Hazel H.

Subjects

Educators--Texas

Document Types

Broadsides
Cartoons (humorous images)
Commonplace books
Diaries
Photographs
Postcards
Sound recordings
Ransom, Harry Huntt, 1908-1976

I. Academic papers, 1924-1947

Student papers

Sewanee Military Academy

University of the South

Yale

Graduate work, 1929-36

Commonplace- and notebook, 1928-35

Teaching notes and related material, 1946-47
II. Correspondence, 1895-1983

Incoming and outgoing, A-Y

Box 2 Folder 2
III. Memorabilia, 1908-1976

Baby book

Documents relating to HHR, 1921-54

Marion Ransom's funeral, 1953

Diplomas and awards, 1924-75

*Sewanee Calendar*, 1976

Gremlins (articles for USAAF, c. 1942)

Miscellaneous manuscript and printed materials; clippings

Commemorative Assembly, 1976

Reel-to-reel tape; regents' resolution

Cassette tapes

Box 2 Folder 3

Folder 4

Folder 5

Folder 6

Folder 7

Folder 8

Folder 9

Box 2 Folder 10

Box 3 Folder 1
IV. Photographs, ca. 1895-1975

Ethel C. McIntosh?; woman and child, ca. 1915

HHR and others, ca. 1910-25

HHR's family

1920s

1910-30

Marion Ransom

HHR at Sewanee Military Academy

University of the South

Small format prints

Campus scenes

Sports and postcards

Negatives

Large format prints

HHR at Valley City, N.D., 1934

Hazel Harrod, Marion Ransom, Mauretania, other 1939 prints and negatives

1939 trip negatives

Hazel Ransom, 1938-1950's; HHR, 1950's and '60s

Miscellaneous, ca. 1930-ca. 1950 (prints and negatives)

Hazel Harrod and USAAF personnel, 1940-46

Hazel and Harry Ransom, 1960s
Ransom, Harry Huntt, 1908-1976
V. Printed materials, 1924-1975

SMA and University of the South ephemera, 1924-28

Art prints; mock-up for HHR bust plaque

*The Marriage Service* (pamphlet) and related

Place cards, tickets, etc.

Stationery and envelopes (unused)

Postcards (unused)
Harry Ransom collection--Index of Correspondents

Names in **bold** appear in the RLIN record.

- Associated Press (Niel Kincey, Brian Bell)--2.2
- Avery, C. N., Jr.--4.3
- Barron, Jean--2.2
- Battle, William James, 1870-1955 (University of Texas)--2.2
- Brewster, Kingman, 1919- --2.2
- Claiborne, William Stirling, 1871- --2.3
- Cline, Henriette F.--2.2
- Colorado State College (Fort Collins, Colo.). Board of Control (L.M. Taylor)--2.2
- Crosby, Kathryn, 1933- --2.2
- Dabney, Virginius, 1901- --2.2
- Davant, Jimmy--2.2
- Groves, John Stuart--2.2
- Guthke, Karl Siegfried, 1933- --2.2
- Hoover, J. Edgar (John Edgar), 1895-1972--2.2
- McCormick, W. G.--2.2
- Newton, A. Edward (Alfred Edward), 1864-1940--2.2
- Nixon, Pat Ireland, 1883-1965--2.2
- Nixon, Robert R.--2.2
- O'Connor, Kate S.--2.2
- Ransom, Harry Huntt, 1908- --2.2
- **Ransom, Harry Huntt, 1908- --2.2**
- **Ransom, Hazel H.**--2.2
- *St. Andrew's Cross, a Church Magazine for Laymen* (George H. Randall)--2.2
- Sewanee Military Academy. Headmaster (Stuart Maclean)--2.2
- Sewanee Military Academy. Office of the Superintendent (DuVal Cravens)--2.2
- Shuffler, R. Henderson (Ralph Henderson), 1908- --2.2
- Smith, Christian--2.2
- State Teachers College (Valley City, N.D.) (C. E. Allen)--2.2
- Tobin, Robert L. B.--2.2
- University of Texas. Dept. of English. Budget Council (L. L. Click)--2.2
- University of the South. College of Arts and Sciences. Office of the Dean (H. M. Gass)--2.2
- Wildy & Sons--2.2
- Willard, Rudolph, 1893- --2.2
- Wilcox, Mark, Jr.--2.2
- Yale University. Graduate School (Edgar S. Furniss; Margaret T. Corwin) --2.2
- Unidentified correspondents:
  - Abbott, ---- (Sewanee teacher)--2.2
  - Jewel (Knoxville, Tenn., 1923)--2.2
  - Max (friend of Walter P. Webb, c. 1950)--2.2
  - Natalie--2.2
  - Smith, ---- *(The Birmingham News; The Montgomery Advertiser)* --2.2

Ransom, Harry Huntt, 1908-1976